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SUBJECT: PAG APPROVES AUXILIARY POLICE

Classified By: Ambassador Ronald Neumann, for reasons 1.4 b and d.

11. (C) The August 30 Policy Action Group (PAG), chaired by National Security Advisor Rassoul, approved in principle a concept for auxiliary police proposed by the Ministry of Interior. The MoI argued that it is essential to provide some level of security in key provinces immediately, particularly since the rebalancing effort has been delayed (septel) and militia/arbakei are already operating in many areas. The MoI plan would put the auxiliary police under the command of ANP leadership and not the governors (who now control the militias). The auxiliaries could be recruited from present militia forces, but as individuals, not groups, and they would have to meet the same standards as ANP patrolmen and would not be permitted to serve in any militia concurrently. They would be registered and receive police ID cards, and would be paid through normal ANP channels, not by governors, operational funds (as is now the case for militiamen). The new auxiliaries would receive 10 days of initial training followed by one week of training per quarter - this would allow them to start immediately rather than facing the usual delay of up to three months for new ANP hires.

12. (C) MoI and CSTC-A have assessed that the relatively short period of time required to hire and train the auxiliary police force is appropriate based upon the sense of urgency President Karzai, s places on bolstering the forces in the south. Auxiliary police would be contracted for only a one year period, although based upon the state of the insurgency in Afghanistan a year from now their term of service could be extended for another year (maximum duration

of service is 2 years). After their service the auxiliary policemen could receive additional training and become members of the ANP. CSTC-A is also working on a plan whereby they could be placed in a "Police Reserve" force. Although the reserve concept is still just a nascent proposal, the thought is that the Police Reserve force would be available to respond to national disasters or mitigate future insurgencies.

13. (C) There were a number of questions from the international community - who pays, who equips, how many auxiliaries are really needed, what salary level, what to do if fewer or different auxiliaries are recruited than in the governors, militias, and so on. The GOA is determined, however, to move ahead with this plan, despite the lack of resolution of these issues. For that reason, Ambassador Neumann pressed the group to move quickly with a pilot project in two provinces, saying that many of the questions raised by PAG members could not be solved in Kabul and would have to be worked out on the ground. It was agreed to begin the experiment in Zabol - which has a good governor (with a militia) and a strong ANA. Second up would be Ghazni, which will need a strong backfill of ANP in conjunction with Operation Mountain Fury. (Note: A pilot program in Ghazni would require a change in the governor there, an action President Karzai has repeatedly promised as being "imminent.")

Comment

KABUL 00004001 002 OF 002

14. (C) We and others in the international community continue to have concerns about auxiliary police. Afghans need national institutions (ANA, ANP, judiciary, etc.) to build an identity as a nation. "Auxiliary police" that respond to district and provincial officials and who owe their employment to those officials will not necessarily aid in building a coherent national identity. Moreover, local populations may confuse them with militia, weakening public perception of central government authority. Auxiliary police should be seen as an interim measure, until the ANA and ANP are sufficiently capable to take over all security duties. It will be essential to ensure that they are paid directly from a central authority, not through the governor. Command and control will have to originate in the Ministry of the Interior, through the regional police commands. Finally, there will need to be a plan to fold police auxiliaries into the ANP within the next three or four years. The MoI proposal, developed with the assistance of CSTC-A, attempts to address many of these concerns.

15. (C) Comment cont,d: "Auxiliaries" potentially serve a number of purposes for different political actors. They offer the GoA an opportunity to "do something" immediately about the shortage of trained ANP. They give elders a direct role in providing security to their respective communities. To the extent they remain under control of governors, they are a patronage tool. Therefore, we can expect calls for "auxiliary police" under governors, control to continue. We have made clear that our support for chain of command to come under the national police as proposed in the MoI plan. Rapid implementation of the MoI plan in one or two provinces will soon show whether the concept is one that could be supported on a larger scale, or whether it is fundamentally misconceived.

¶6. (U) Post will email the draft Terms of Reference for the Recruiting and Employment of the Temporary Auxiliary Police to SCA/A and INL/FO.
NEUMANN